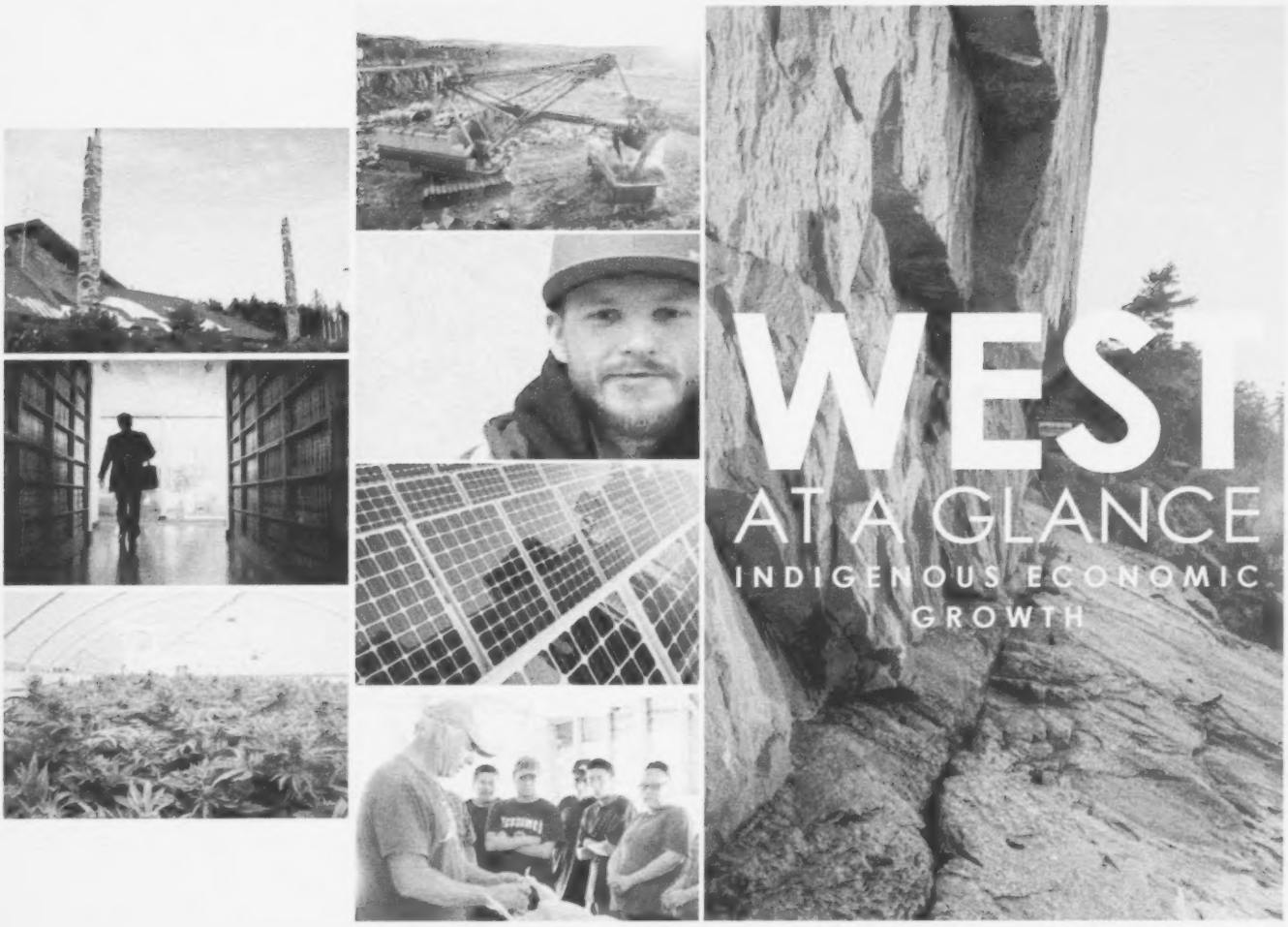
Western Economic Diversification Canada

Diversification de l'économie de l'Ouest Canada



WEST AT A GLANCE

INDIGENOUS ECONOMIC GROWTH

Spring 2018

Canada

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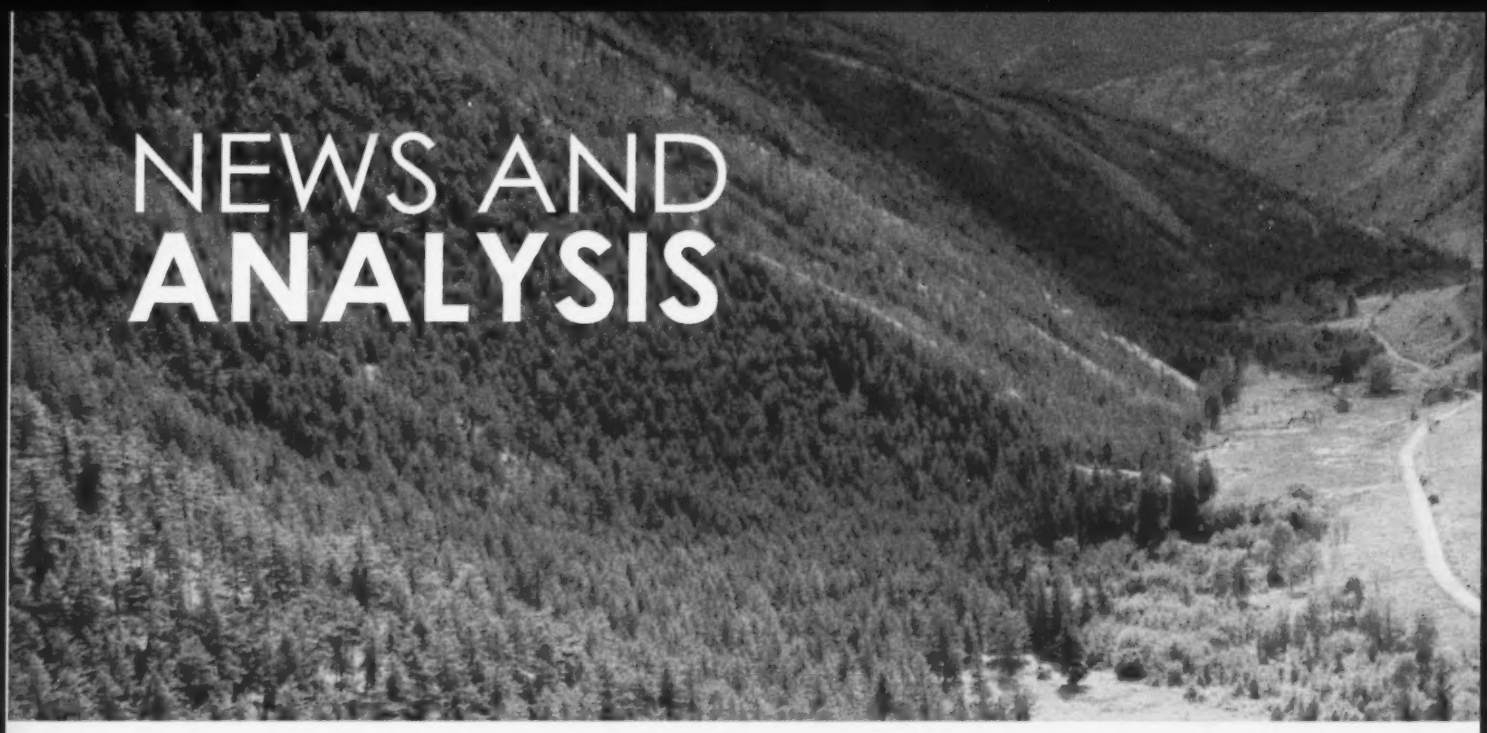
About Western Economic Diversification Canada

Western Economic Diversification Canada (WD) was established to promote the development and diversification of the economy of Western Canada and to advance the interests of the West in national economic policy, program and project development and implementation.

The Department plays a key role as co-investor, convener, and champion for the West, making strategic investments that strengthen the West's traditional economic drivers while accelerating the development of new opportunities.

WD's strategic investments help researchers and businesses move new ideas from the test bench to the market, support skills development and foster business innovation. WD also advocates on behalf of western Canadian industry, working to ensure that businesses are strong, competitive, and poised to take advantage of opportunities in the global marketplace.

Canada



NEWS AND **ANALYSIS**

BRITISH COLUMBIA

New BC government taking unprecedented steps towards reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples

In July 2017, British Columbia's New Democratic Party government joined the federal government in a commitment to implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action. Both governments have recently introduced budgets that prioritize reconciliation and share a focus on people. The alignment in federal and provincial intent provides a unique opportunity for both levels of government to work better together to advance Indigenous community growth and economic growth.

British Columbia has a unique status in Canada as the only province built mostly on Indigenous territories that were never ceded through treaty or war, or otherwise surrendered by the Indigenous Peoples. In the landmark Tsilhqot'in Nation decision in 2014, the Supreme Court of Canada found that Indigenous Canadians still hold Aboriginal title to their ancestral lands unless they have signed away their ownership in treaties with government. The Tsilhqot'in Nation decision was the first declaration of its kind in Canada. It clarified that Aboriginal title confers on Indigenous Peoples the right to the benefits associated with the land: to use it, enjoy it and profit from its economic development.

In October 2017, British Columbia's new Premier John Horgan became the first government leader to address this uncertainty surrounding BC's Crown land title question, when he acknowledged the unceded territory of Indigenous Peoples in BC. In doing so, he signalled that the province would prioritize reconciliation and recognition.

February's BC Budget 2018 marked a significant shift in priorities from previous governments, pivoting toward investments in social infrastructure such as childcare and housing. In her Budget speech, BC Finance Minister Carol James reinforced the view that economic growth is based on taking care of people first. In this context, reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples is expected to form part of the province's future growth.

Canada's federal Budget 2018 also demonstrated the federal government's efforts to redefine its relationship with Indigenous Peoples, directing more than a quarter of new spending to Indigenous social services and infrastructure. WD's priorities of inclusiveness and assisting Indigenous Peoples to participate in the economy are particularly relevant in BC's current social and political landscape.

But the scope of the challenge is broad, and it will take significant investments to make a difference. That is why a culture of cooperation among federal departments and between federal and provincial counterparts is emerging in BC. By aligning, streamlining and leveraging each other's owrk, their goal is to deliver client-focused service that makes it easier for Indigenous groups to benefit from government programs.

One means of achieving this is the Indigenous Interests and Issues Committee (IIIC, or "triple-I-C"). Formed in December 2015, IIIC creates opportunities for federal departments in BC to work together to make progress on Canada's relationship with Indigenous Peoples. It is not easy, however, to break down silos between departments and find new ways of doing business. What sounds simple on the surface requires dedication and patience to implement.

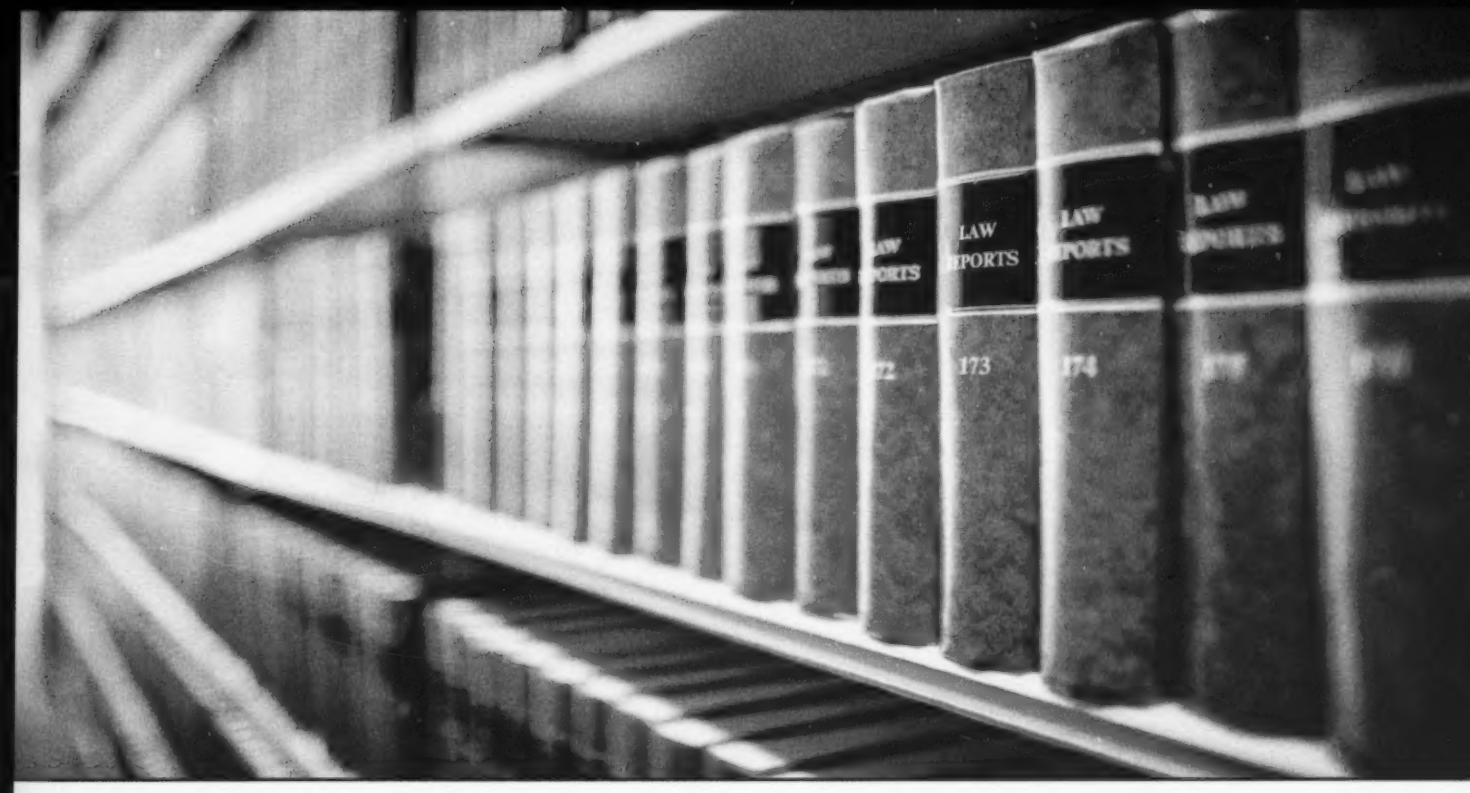
The federal and provincial alignment on commitments to reconciliation reinforce our shared objectives. In particular, there is potential for BC's stronger social mandate in Indigenous communities to complement WD's focus on jobs and growth. When government works better together, it can also work better with Indigenous Peoples to support their full participation in the economy and strengthen their communities.

University of Victoria breaks new ground with world's first Indigenous Law Program

For Indigenous communities, the path to self-determination includes building new legal structures, systems and constitutions to govern their people. The recent government mandates for reconciliation represent an opportunity for these communities to reconnect with the laws of their pre-colonial societies. For years, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous academics have fought for greater recognition of the Indigenous legal structures that predate colonization and are deeply set in Indigenous cultural identity. The development of strong legal institutions is an important element in improving the functioning of governance institutions, enhancing growth, promoting secure property rights, improving access to credit and delivering justice in society. In September 2018, the University of Victoria (UVic) will make history by introducing the world's first Indigenous Law program. The BC Government is contributing $2 million to the program under its Budget 2018 objective to build a strong and sustainable economy.

The newly minted program will train 25 students in both Indigenous and non-Indigenous law, enabling graduates to work fluently across cultures. Students will graduate with two professional degrees, one in Canadian Common Law (Juris Doctor or 'JD') and one in Indigenous Legal Orders (Juris Indigenarum Doctor or 'JID'). If UVic meets their expected intake targets over the next decade, the program will produce 250 lawyers with a unique skillset that includes navigating Canadian common law alongside the laws of Indigenous communities. This is a challenging endeavour, requiring the same deep sense of cultural understanding that is needed for the rigorous task of reconciliation.

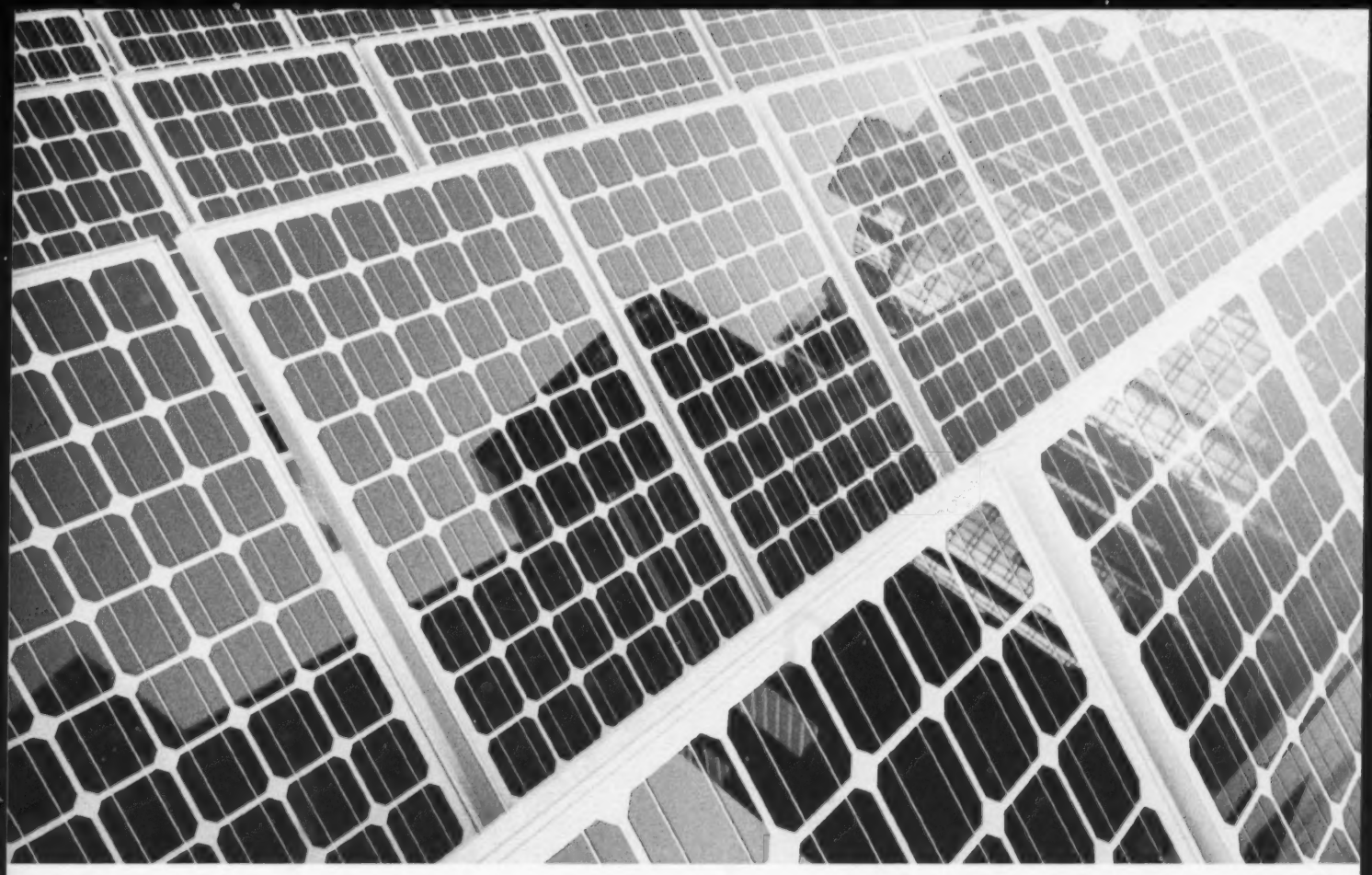
The program was founded by two of Canada's most acclaimed Indigenous legal experts: John Burrows, Canada Research Chair in Indigenous Law, and



Val Napoleon, Law Foundation Chair in Aboriginal Justice and Governance. Napoleon is currently the director of UVic's Indigenous Law Research Unit, which works with Indigenous communities to explore how to incorporate Indigenous legal principles into social, economic, environmental and political activities. Napoleon's work reveals how law plays a part in all aspects of political, economic and social life, including harvesting fish and game, accessing and distributing resources, and managing lands and waters.

Cultural differences in the interpretation of laws and Indigenous rights are often at the centre of court challenges over Indigenous rights and title. In 1996, the case of a Sto:lo woman selling sockeye salmon to a non-Indigenous person under her inherent right to fish sparked debate over what is considered integral to distinctive culture, and how Indigenous rights impact economic participation in broader Canadian society. The Indigenous Law program will explore tools to identify ancestral laws, analyze how they have evolved over time with society, and determine their application within and across governance structures.

This program is a testament to the growing interest in the recognition and revitalization of Indigenous law by the academy, legal professions, governance organizations and Indigenous communities. However, it also raises questions about the appropriate methods for applying Indigenous law within the current legal landscape. Unlike Quebec's French-heritage civil law, which has standing in Quebec and is recognized elsewhere in Canada, Indigenous laws exist outside the Canadian legal system. This positioning, along with the cultural diversity across Canada's 634 Indigenous Peoples, has made formal integration of Indigenous laws difficult to achieve. The introduction of the Juris Indigenarum Doctor is a milestone in turning these challenges into academic opportunities to examine new systems that promote a renewed nation-to-nation relationship.



ALBERTA

Indigenous communities participating in a cleaner energy sector

There are several initiatives underway in Alberta that are helping Indigenous communities and companies transition to cleaner sources of power, and also to invest and participate in the energy sector.

The Government of Alberta's (GoA) Alberta Indigenous Solar Program provides grants to Alberta Indigenous communities or organizations to install solar photovoltaic systems on facilities owned by the community or organization. This program is primarily geared towards smaller micro-generation projects. Several communities have taken advantage of this program, including Cold Lake First Nation, Beaver Lake Cree Nation, Peavine Métis Settlement and Horse Lake First Nation.

The Alberta Indigenous Green Energy Development Program assists Indigenous communities and organizations to acquire an ownership stake in Alberta's rapidly expanding renewable energy sector. The program provides funding for communities to develop and implement projects. Project development funding provides communities with financial support for all stages of a project proposal, including pre-feasibility assessments, technical feasibility studies and business plans. Project implementation funding supports commercial-scale renewable energy projects that are owned

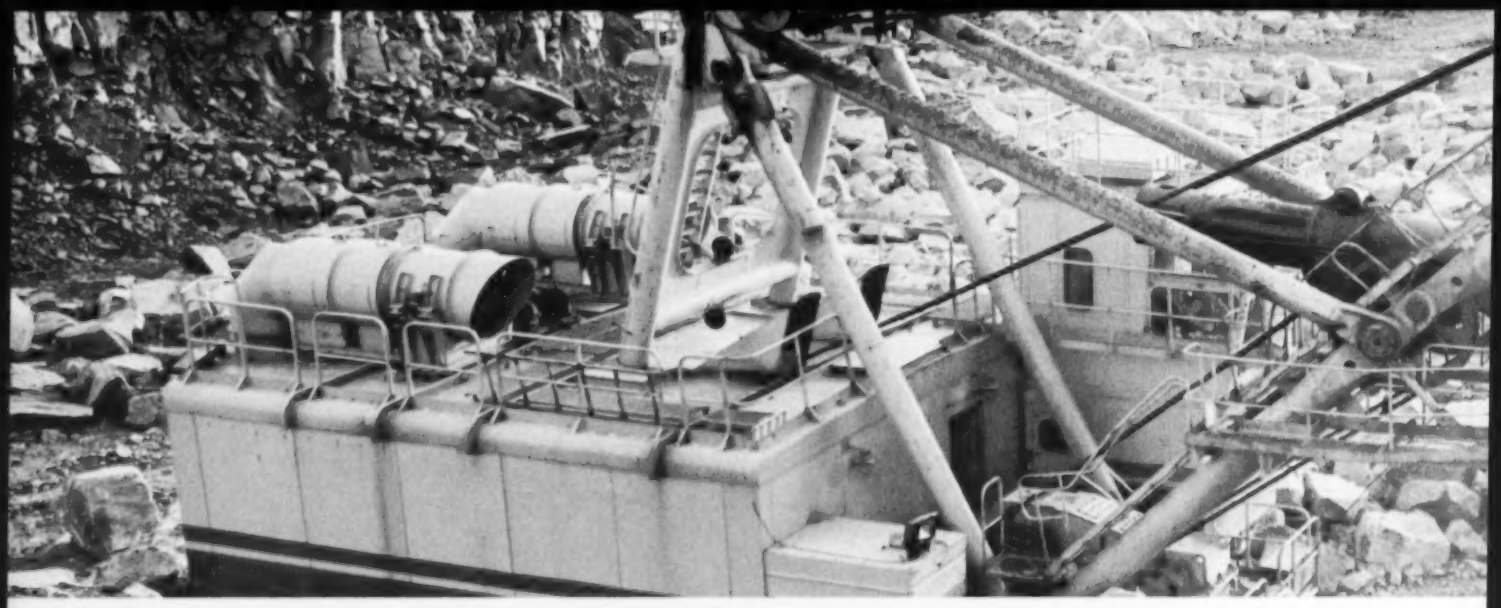
by eligible Indigenous communities or organizations and feed into Alberta's energy grid.

On February 5th, 2018, the GoA announced that the next round of its Renewable Electricity Program competition will require companies to include an Indigenous equity component through an ownership stake or land use agreement. The GoA is preparing to open the next two rounds of the competitive bidding process, which are intended to secure approximately 700 megawatts (MW) of renewable electricity production. The Kainai First Nation in southern Alberta has a 200-MW wind project that is shovel-ready if selected. In total, the Alberta government hopes to add 5,000 MW of renewable energy by 2030 through private sector investment of approximately $10 billion.

Indigenous communities are also increasing their involvement in the energy sector through investments and industry partnerships. In November 2017, the Fort McKay and Mikisew Cree First Nations finalized an agreement to purchase a 49 percent interest in a Suncor Energy oil sands storage facility for $503 million. The facility is a bitumen storage, blending and cooling operation connected to the Fort Hills oil sands mining project 30 kilometres north of Fort McMurray. Fort McKay will own 34 percent of the project, while Mikisew Cree will own 15 percent. This investment will provide both First Nations a revenue stream over the next 25 years.

Despite the downturn in the oil and gas industry, Indigenous-owned businesses are experiencing growth as oil sands companies prioritize working with them. Calgary-based Syncrude Canada announced that, in 2017, it spent a record $342 million with Indigenous-owned business, bringing total spending to over $3 billion since 1992. Syncrude works with more than 50 Indigenous-owned companies based in Wood Buffalo, including the Fort McKay Group of Companies, which employs more than 1,000 people on Syncrude's Mildred Lake site near Fort McMurray.

According to Alberta's Minister of Indigenous Relations, the Government of Alberta is creating recommendations to revamp industry-Indigenous relations in the context of natural resource development projects. The draft recommendations will define the role of Indigenous communities in land and resource projects, who needs to be contacted and in what time frame, and how to fund ongoing conversations between industry and Indigenous Peoples. The provincial government will continue to engage with Indigenous communities and industry stakeholders prior to finalizing the policy, which will address whether the outcome of a project reflects Indigenous concerns. This is in line with the renewed Canada-Alberta Oil Sands Environmental Monitoring Agreement, which calls for enhanced collaboration with local Indigenous communities and allows for greater Indigenous involvement in monitoring priorities and decisions. The agreement supports a joint long-term program that provides information on the environmental impacts of oil sands development. Funded by industry, the renewed plan will include an additional $2 million annually to help local Indigenous communities develop and implement community-based monitoring programs.



SASKATCHEWAN

Temporary closure of uranium mine in Saskatchewan's north

In November 2017, Saskatoon-based Cameco Corporation announced a temporary shutdown at its McArthur River mine and Key Lake mill in northern Saskatchewan. The shutdown took full effect in February 2018, and is expected to last ten months. As a result of the shutdown, 845 employees have been temporarily laid off. Roughly 200 additional employees will remain on site to perform care and maintenance duties. To retain its workers, Cameco has offered to supplement employment insurance for laid-off employees with up to 75 percent of their regular earnings.

The shutdown at McArthur River and Key Lake follows a 2016 decision to suspend operations at Cameco's Rabbit Lake mine, which reduced the company's workforce in Saskatchewan by 500 positions. Following the 2011 Fukushima Daiichi nuclear disaster in Japan, uranium prices decreased significantly and have remained low. This has caused Cameco to experience losses and make moves to reduce its costs.

Saskatchewan is the world's second largest primary uranium producer, with 2017 exports totalling $823.8 million. Cameco is one of the world's largest uranium mining companies, with its mines in Saskatchewan, the United States and Kazakhstan accounting for roughly 17 percent of world production. As of December 2016, Cameco employed 2,963 individuals at its Canadian operations, 23 percent of whom were Indigenous. 54 percent of the people employed at McArthur River and Key Lake are from northern Saskatchewan.

The shutdown of the Cameco mines is especially worrying given the precarious state of the regional economy. Compared to the province's south, northern Saskatchewan's economy is relatively underdeveloped, and residents face higher unemployment rates and lower wages than elsewhere in the province. As of the 2016 Census, Indigenous Peoples accounted for 87 percent of northern Saskatchewan's population, compared with 16 percent of Saskatchewan's total population. Nine percent of northern Saskatchewan's labour force works in mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction.

The Keewatin Career Development Corporation notes that increasing opportunities for northern individuals and businesses related to uranium mining has been a key economic development strategy for the region for over three decades. A prolonged downturn in uranium mining activity or further closures will put downward pressure on growth in northern Saskatchewan and reduce opportunities for Indigenous Peoples and other residents of the region.

Whitecap Dakota First Nation Framework Agreement signed

On January 22, 2018, Whitecap Dakota First Nation (WDFN) and the Government of Canada signed a Framework Agreement for a Whitecap Dakota Treaty. According to Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada, the Framework Agreement "sets the stage for exploratory discussions to identify ways to achieve meaningful and lasting reconciliation." Discussions undertaken under the Framework Agreement will include establishing common ground for treaty negotiations between Canada and WDFN.

Whitecap Dakota First Nation (WDFN) is located 26 kilometres south of Saskatoon, and was established by Order-In-Council in 1889. The Dakota have a long relationship with the British Crown, with agreements recorded since at least 1787. They were also British allies during the War of 1812. However, WDFN is not a signatory to a numbered or modern treaty. The Framework Agreement notes that "Chief Whitecap was present at Treaty discussions for both Treaty 4 and Treaty 6, but was not invited to sign either of these Treaties because of Government of Canada policy concerning the Dakota at that time."

The Framework Agreement further acknowledges that members of WDFN do not enjoy the same Treaty recognition and benefits as Treaty signatory First Nations. According to the CBC, Whitecap Dakota Chief Darcy Bear has stated that WDFN's main goals in treaty discussions are recognition as a Treaty Nation, gaining more land and resources for growth and economic development, and protecting Dakota language and culture.

MANITOBA

First Nations entrepreneurs play a role in Manitoba's cannabis plan

Manitoba recently announced it has "conditionally accepted" proposals from four groups to distribute cannabis in the province once it is legalized later this year. Two of the four groups prominently feature representation from Manitoba First Nations. One is a newly formed partnership which includes Fisher River Cree Nation in Manitoba, and the other is the National Access Cannabis Corp, which has spent a number of months signing up Manitoba First Nations to its retail group. Five Manitoba-based First Nations, including Opaskwayak Cree Nation, Long Plain First Nation, Peguis First Nation, Brokenhead Ojibway Nation and Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation, are involved.

According to a recent Winnipeg Free Press article, not all Indigenous groups are happy

with the selection process. The Manitoba Métis Federation also responded to the province's Request for Proposals (RFP) for cannabis stores through its business arm, Métis N4 Construction, but were unsuccessful. The proposal, which included partners in Ontario, involved a cannabis production facility in Manitoba that would have employed Métis people.

The groups were chosen based on their responses to a November 2017 RFP issued by the province seeking qualified applicants to operate retail cannabis locations.

Indigenous business leaders seeking national unified voice

Canadian Indigenous businesses from coast to coast may soon have a unified voice: the Winnipeg-based Aboriginal Chamber of Commerce is working towards becoming a national body. The chamber has been growing since it was founded in 2004 and now has around 150 members in Manitoba. Each year, it coordinates more events, adds more profiles to its website, and organizes seminars and learning opportunities. It was instrumental in helping WD host its Indigenous Foresight event in December 2016.

This growth in membership and activities, along with recent board member additions (including former chair of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce Michael McMullen), are two reasons that the group is looking to open membership to out-of-province businesses.

Manitoba invites recommendations to increase venture capital

The Government of Manitoba is taking steps to implement their upcoming economic growth strategy. They recently issued both a request for information for an access to capital strategy and a request for pre-qualifications for a new venture capital fund. The new provincially supported venture capital fund is intended to address a gap that currently exists in the province, attract private-sector venture capital and leverage those resources for local small and medium-sized businesses.

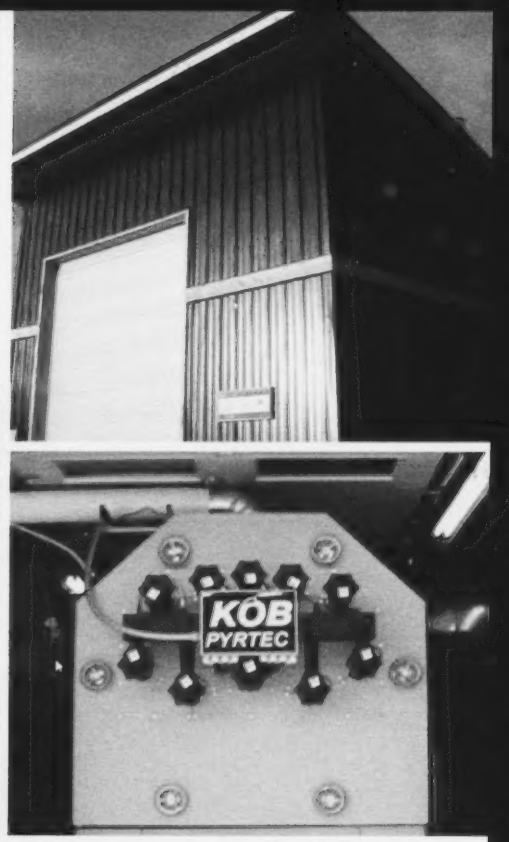
The Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce welcomed the news, noting that capital fuels business expansion and job creation. Loren Remillard, President and CEO of the Chamber, stated "access to capital is a leading obstacle for local businesses looking to grow in Manitoba. It is why we have long called for a comprehensive local capital strategy, one that helps bridge the financing gaps along the business continuum from ideation to initial public offering." The Chamber is looking forward to working with the province on next steps.

J.R. Simplot announces $460 million expansion

The US-based J.R. Simplot Company announced a $460 million expansion of their potato processing operations in Portage la Prairie, an investment that will create about 90 new jobs in Manitoba's fifth largest city. It is the second significant value-added agriculture investment in the city in the past year, after France-based Roquette broke ground on their $400 million pea processing plant in October 2017.

As part of the expansion, Simplot will incorporate similar industry-leading energy and water efficiency processes which the company first established at its plant in Caldwell, Idaho. The Idaho plant was awarded the Food Processing Green Plant of the Year in 2017 by a leading industry publication.

Manitoba is the second-largest potato producer in the country, with growers annually harvesting over 65,000 acres of potatoes, or one-fifth of the Canada's total potato crop.



BRITISH COLUMBIA

Haida Gwaii community reduces carbon footprint by using renewable energy sources to heat public buildings

Until recently, the Haida community of Old Massett depended on diesel generation and other fossil fuels to provide electricity for their community buildings. However, in 2017, the Old Massett Village Council converted the heating system of five large buildings – health center, school, band office, and social development building – to a high-efficiency biomass boiler system with $323,388 in funding from WD through the British Columbia Indigenous Clean Energy Initiative (BCICEI) and the Canada 150 Community Infrastructure Program (CIP 150).

Upgrades to the buildings resulted in energy cost savings of over $130,000 per year. It also reduced the town's carbon footprint from 253 tons to 10.7 tons of CO2/year and created five new jobs in the community.

Since 2016, the BCICEI has provided $2.26 million for micro-hydro, solar, geothermal, bioenergy and innovative demand-side management projects in 18 Indigenous communities across the province. The initiative is managed by New Relationship Trust (NRT), an independent non-profit organization dedicated to strengthening First Nations in BC through capacity building. In 2017-18, NRT supported 10 clean energy projects, totalling $1.26 million. A third intake for the initiative closed in March; decisions are expected by early summer.

ALBERTA

Photo Credit: Trade Winds to Success Training Society

Investing in the potential of Indigenous Peoples in Alberta

In 2016, Trade Winds to Success Training Society received $1,069,938 through Western Economic Diversification Canada (WD) to support the expansion of pre-apprenticeship training for Indigenous Peoples in Alberta.

Trade Winds to Success Training Society provides Indigenous youth with an opportunity to develop their job skills and prepare for careers in a wide range of trades. Since 2015, 362 participants have completed the program, which positions the Society to be well on their way to meeting their goal of training 405 program participants by the end of 2018.

One example of the project in action is Alexander Hunter. With a lifelong passion for carpentry, Alexander is a proud recent graduate of the pre-apprenticeship program. The training helped him build his skills and strengthen his confidence in rough carpentry/cabinet making contract work and in his own home renovations. Hunter says he is truly grateful for every aspect of the program and especially acknowledges program Journeyman, Roland Large, whom Hunter says is wise, patient and intelligent.

Hunter is currently working on a project in his home community of Saddle Lake Cree Nation and has his sights set on becoming a journeyman. He knows it will take a great deal of hard work, and the keys to his success will be determination, ambition and confidence. It is easy to understand why Hunter's wife and three stepchildren are proud of his dedication and achievements. He is an outstanding example of why Trade Winds to Success Training Society developed this program, and why WD supports the Society and celebrates its adult learners.

SASKATCHEWAN

Indigenous businesses grow thanks to matching service

Aboriginal Business Match (ABM) events are not new in Saskatchewan, but in 2017, they stepped up their game. Working with the Saskatchewan Indian Equity Foundation Inc. (SIEF), Western Economic Diversification Canada (WD) funded two ABM events. Each one focused on specific economic sectors – in Saskatoon, it was infrastructure and new technologies, and in Regina, agriculture and manufacturing. "ABM Spotlights" built on past successes by narrowing sectors to those trending in Saskatchewan, and including a new Regina location to attract more participants.

Organizers facilitated business meetings between Indigenous and non-Indigenous companies and community organizations. Efficient and focused meetings provided an opportunity to "break the ice" without specific agendas, and quickly determined if the parties might find value in further business discussions. The events brought a lot of people together for a short time, maximizing the impact of time and resource commitments, and increasing the chances of establishing new, mutually beneficial business relationships. They attracted a wide variety of small and medium-sized enterprises, business service providers, educational institutions, industry partners, and others with a stake in Indigenous economic development.

For WD, investing and participating in ABM events helped build relationships, define the Indigenous business landscape, and make connections for potential future funding, partnerships and advocacy. Participants were generally very satisfied with their ABM experience and almost all felt they had established valuable new contacts and would attend future events.

MANITOBA

Photo Credit: Meechim Farm

Growing and producing healthy food options for remote, fly-in northern Manitoba community

Seeing a need for an affordable, healthy food system for Garden Hill First Nation in northern Manitoba, Garden Hill and Aki Energy created Meechim Farm (Meechim is Oji-Cree for "food"). It aims to grow and raise healthy food while creating long-term employment and sustainable economic growth in the community.

Meechim Farm includes five initiatives that provide community members with the opportunity to purchase locally grown and produced food, as well as the chance to learn how to become producers themselves.

The Meechim Healthy Food Market sells healthy produce, meats, and eggs. The Healthy Foodbox pilot program will help address the high rate of diabetes in Garden Hill, offering recipes and boxes of fruit, vegetables and proteins at a reduced price. The School-to-Farm Project teaches elementary students the importance of healthy food and how to grow it. The Farm School is an innovative, educational and experiential hands-on training centre for young adults interested in learning how to farm.

The Alex Keno Memorial Farm, in addition to the poultry and egg operation, uses soil developed with fish fertilizer to produce a dozen different varieties of fruits and vegetables. With support from the Churchill and Region Economic Development (CRED) Fund, the farm will purchase a sawmill that will allow it to build more chicken coops, hen barns and greenhouses, and will provide a revenue stream through small-scale lumber sales.

Western Economic Diversification Canada works closely with municipal, business and community leaders on medium- and longer-term economic development opportunities. The Department has entered into an agreement with Community Futures Manitoba to administer the CRED fund. Community Futures Manitoba has established a community-based management committee to review and approve projects that encourage medium- and long-term sustainable economic development and diversification of the local economies; facilitate economic adjustment; and enable collaboration and partnerships leading to enterprise opportunities in Churchill and the surrounding communities.

UPCOMING **EVENTS**

BRITISH COLUMBIA

Inclusion Works '18: Creating Partnership Intersections
Kelowna, BC | April 16-18, 2018

Indigenous Works will host a management learning forum focused on Indigenous/non-Indigenous partnership development.

Mari-Tech 2018
Victoria, BC | April 18-20, 2018

The annual conference of the Canadian Institute of Marine Engineering will explore the future of marine engineering and ship innovations.

20th Annual LifeSciences BC Awards Dinner
Vancouver, BC | April 19, 2018

Presented by FARRIS, the Awards recognize and honour the efforts of those who have invested their life's work in mastering successful health outcomes.

2nd Annual First Nations Housing & Infrastructure West
Vancouver, BC | April 23-25, 2018

The Canadian Institute will explore the housing crisis in British Columbia, and what provincial initiatives can close the gap on housing and infrastructure needs.

Aboriginal Business Match Syilx/Okanagan Territory
Penticton, BC | May 7-9, 2018

The Aboriginal Business Match connects a national network of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal decision makers to create opportunities for business, training and employment.

The conference brings together government, academia, research organizations and others to assess the state of knowledge related to cities and climate change, and to establish a global research agenda based on the identification of key gaps.

#BCTECH Summit
Vancouver, BC | May 14-16, 2018

Delivered by the Government of British Columbia and the BC Innovation Council, the #BCTECH Summit will explore how technology is driving cross-industry growth and change, and what companies need to do to emerge as global leaders.

Green Tech 2018
Vancouver, BC | May 30 - June 1, 2018

In addition to discussing issues directly related to Green Marine's environmental certification's performance indicators, GreenTech 2018 will tackle emerging issues and other topics related to shipping and port sustainability.

BC Economic Summit
Kelowna, BC | June 10-12, 2018

The BC Economic Development Association will look at what is being done in BC and globally to accelerate local economies.

FoodProWest 2018: The Future of Food
Vancouver, BC | June 21, 2018

The BC Food Processors Association is partnering with the BC Government to bring in buyers from around the world to see new products and make export deals.

ALBERTA

Western Canada Hemp Industry Conference
Edmonton, AB | April 20, 2018

Alberta Council of Technologies is hosting a conference designed to consolidate the various interest involved in developing Western Canada's emerging hemp industry.

AccelerateAB 2018
Edmonton, AB | April 24, 2018

AccelerateAB 2018 will focus on Artificial Intelligence and the many possibilities it brings.

Argus Canada Week
Calgary, AB | April 30 - May 4, 2018

This week will feature three events hosted by Argus: Argus Alberta Carbon Markets, Argus Canadian Crude Summit, and Argus Canadian NGL & Petrochemical Summit.

4th Annual Aboriginal Economic Development Conference
Calgary, AB | May 10, 2018

Hosted by the Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business, the event will focus on "Buy Aboriginal! The Power of Procurement in the Age of Economic Reconciliation".

Energy Disruptors: Unite 2018
Calgary, AB | May 15-16, 2018

Energy Disruptors will host inspirational presentations by global thought leaders in technology, entrepreneurship, energy and disruption.

Alberta Energy Efficiency Summit
Calgary, AB | May 16-17, 2018

Alberta Energy Efficiency Alliance will host a forum to collaborate, learn, network and receive insights into the latest trends in energy efficiency.

INVENTURES 2018
Calgary, AB | June 6-8, 2018

This conference, hosted by Ventures Canada, will bring together research, innovation, commercialization, capital access, experiential learning and entrepreneurial communities to discuss successes, best practices, opportunities and ideas.

Oil Sands Innovation Summit 2018
Calgary, AB | June 6-8, 2018

The Canada's Oil Sands Innovation Alliance will host technical sessions providing an opportunity for operators, academia, engineering and technology providers, and government to showcase their latest innovations for improving environmental performance in the oil sands.

Global Petroleum Show
Calgary, AB | June 12-14, 2018

The Global Petroleum Show is an oil and gas exhibition that showcases new products, innovations and ideas and facilitates networking for the world's energy sector.

WestDef 2018
Calgary, AB | June 26-28, 2018

Hosted by the Western Canadian Defence Industries Association, this event will examine trends, develop innovation strategies and discuss supply chain opportunities in the aerospace, defence and security industries.

SASKATCHEWAN

2018 Tansley Lecture
Regina, SK| April 19, 2018

Hosted by the Johnson Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy, this event focuses on Saskatchewan's social and economic frontiers, as presented by the Honourable Preston Manning, political activist and commentator.

Slow Food in Canada National Summit
Saskatoon, SK | April 19-22, 2018

Hosted by Slow Food Saskatoon, this event focuses on topics including the foundations of Indigenous food systems, and research and development in foods that thrive in our climate.

Incoming Mission - 2018 Middle East & North Africa Trade Conference
Saskatoon, SK | April 25, 2018

Organized by Saskatchewan Trade & Export Partnership, this event gives Saskatchewan pulses, special crops, cereals and feed suppliers and exporters an opportunity to meet with buyers from countries in the Middle East and North Africa.

The 5th Annual Agri-Value Workshop and Networking Event
Saskatoon, SK | May 3, 2018

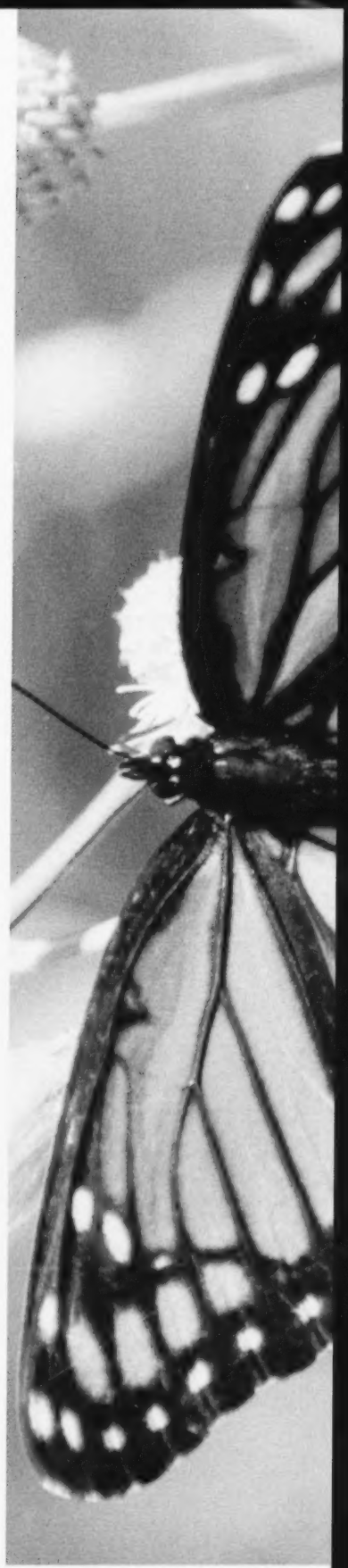
Co-hosted by Innovation Saskatchewan, the Government of Saskatchewan and Ag-West Bio, this event will discuss topics including food safety and sustainability.

11th Canadian Plant Biotechnology Conference
Saskatoon, SK | May 15-17, 2018

Organized by the Canadian Association for Plant Biotechnology, this event will host expert discussions on topics related to plant biotechnology.

Saskatoon Digital Marketing Conference
Saskatoon, SK | May 17-18, 2018

This event includes topics such as email marketing, data science and big data, and search engine optimization.



Saskatchewan Mining Week 2018
Moose Jaw, SK | May 27 - June 2, 2018

Saskatchewan Mining Week 2018 will include the 50th Annual Emergency Response Mine Rescue Skills Competition.

2018 Canadian Association for Program in Public Administration Conference
Regina, SK | May 31 - June 1, 2018

This event will focus on diverse gatherings and innovations.

2018 Emerging Technologies for Global Food Security Conference
Saskatoon, SK | June 19-21, 2018

Hosted by the Global Institute for Food Security, this event will include speakers discussing nitrogen fertilizers and biodiversity conservation, among other topics.

Canada's Farm Progress Show
Regina, SK | June 20-22, 2018

This event promotes education, innovation, growth and collaboration in the agricultural industry.

The 5th International One Health Congress
Saskatoon, SK | June 22-25, 2018

This event features world experts who will discuss topics such as food and water safety, political and social science.

MANITOBA

Manitoba Chambers of Commerce 87th Annual General Meeting and Conference
Onanole, MB | May 3-4, 2018

This conference will be a two-day event with the theme of "Focusing on the Future". It will be hosted by the Wasagaming Chamber of Commerce at Elkhorn Resort.

2018 Lean Conference – Embracing Excellence
Winnipeg, MB | June 4-7 2018

A conference to learn from lean leaders and business leaders about the application of lean thinking in manufacturing, public and service sector organizations.

KEY ECONOMIC **INDICATORS**

GDP

	BC	AB	SK	MB	Canada	Last Update
Real GDP[1] (2007 $billions, forecast)	$233	$317	$60	$58	$1,782	2018
% ch. from year earlier	*3.1%*	*2.8%*	*1.3%*	*1.8%*	*2.3%*	

LABOUR MARKET

	BC	AB	SK	MB	Canada	Last Update
Employment (SA, thousands)	2,483	2,317	567	642	18,573	Feb-18
Change from previous month	-3.4	2.3	-2.9	-0.5	15.4	
% ch. from previous month	*-0.1%*	*0.1%*	*-0.5%*	*-0.1%*	*0.1%*	
% ch. from year earlier	*1.6%*	*2.0%*	*-1.4%*	*0.6%*	*1.5%*	
Unemployment Rate (SA,%)	4.7%	6.7%	5.6%	5.9%	5.8%	Feb-18
percentage points from previous month	*-0.1*	*-0.3*	*0.2*	*0.3*	*-0.1*	
percentage points from year earlier	*-0.4*	*-1.5*	*-0.3*	*0.1*	*-0.8*	
Regular EI beneficiaries (SA)	46,340	63,090	18,260	15,760	500,060	Dec-17
Change from previous month	-560	-540	-30	-100	-5,470	
% ch. from previous month	*-1.2%*	*-0.8%*	*-0.2%*	*-0.6%*	*-1.1%*	
% ch. from previous year	*-15.8%*	*-33.9%*	*-5.8%*	*-0.5%*	*-11.9%*	
Average weekly earnings	$956.91	$1,148.59	$1,033.57	$920.87	$992.87	Dec-17
Change from previous year	$25.48	$13.30	$27.36	$23.02	$21.87	

PRICES

	BC	AB	SK	MB	Canada	Last Update
CPI (y/y)	2.1%	1.4%	2.5%	2.1%	1.7%	Jan-18
CPI (y/y) previous month	2.0%	2.0%	3.4%	2.9%	1.9%	Dec-17

[1]Real GDP at basic prices, forecast for 2018 (Conference Board of Canada Provincial Outlook Winter 2018)

SA - Seasonally adjusted SAAR - Seasonally adjusted at annual rates

Sources: Statistics Canada and Conference Board of Canada

CONSUMERS *and* BUSINESS

	BC	AB	SK	MB	Canada	Last Update
Retail Sales (SA, $millions)	$7,203	$6,740	$1,678	$1,650	$49,647	Dec-17
% ch. from previous month	*-0.6%*	*-0.5%*	*0.1%*	*-1.4%*	*-0.8%*	
% ch. from previous year	*10.6%*	*4.7%*	*2.8%*	*2.8%*	*5.8%*	
Manufacturing Sales (SA, $millions)	$4,370	$6,241	$1,304	$1,587	$55,518	Dec-17
% ch. from previous month	*-0.7%*	*1.2%*	*-7.4%*	*3.2%*	*-0.3%*	
% ch. from previous year	*8.8%*	*11.7%*	*0.0%*	*8.2%*	*3.7%*	
Building Permits (SA, $millions)	$1,512	$1,130	$243	$234	$8,071	Dec-17
% ch. from previous month	*26.5%*	*-10.9%*	*31.7%*	*-25.3%*	*4.7%*	
% ch. from previous year	*53.5%*	*29.8%*	*75.5%*	*23.2%*	*9.6%*	
Housing Starts (SAAR, thousands)	33	24	4	5	230	Feb-18
% ch. from previous month	*-24.3%*	*-3.5%*	*-34.9%*	*0.9%*	*6.7%*	
% ch. from previous year	*9.1%*	*-8.5%*	*-19.9%*	*-45.4%*	*9.9%*	

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

	BC	AB	SK	MB	Canada	Last Update
Merchandise Exports ($millions)	$3,460	$10,072	$2,767	$1,156	$41,978	Jan-18
% ch. from previous month	*-8.1%*	*10.7%*	*10.0%*	*-4.0%*	*-1.6%*	
% ch. from previous year	*-1.5%*	*18.5%*	*4.0%*	*4.2%*	*2.4%*	
Merchandise Imports ($millions)	$4,124	$2,342	$988	$1,759	$43,730	Jan-18
% ch. from previous month	*-2.6%*	*1.7%*	*-8.6%*	*-4.6%*	*-3.3%*	
% ch. from previous year	*10.0%*	*12.4%*	*14.3%*	*13.8%*	*4.5%*	

DEMOGRAPHICS

	BC	AB	SK	MB	Canada	Last Update
Population (estimate)	4,841,078	4,306,039	1,168,057	1,343,371	36,885,049	Q4 2017
% ch. from previous year	*1.3%*	*1.3%*	*1.3%*	*1.5%*	*1.3%*	
Largest Cities (CMAs)	Vancouver (2,463,431) Victoria* (367,770)	Calgary (1,392,609) Edmonton* (1,321,426)	Saskatoon (295,095) Regina* (236,481)	Winnipeg* (778,489)		2016

** Provincial Capital*